115 121 a survey of the development and buildup of the Magadan-Kolyma area with the intention of serving as an introduction to subsequent reports on current activities in the Kolyma region.

[134] 63 2) Physical Features of Kolyma: Kolyma is that region in the northeastern part of Siberia, named for the Kolyma River; the boundaries have never been made public, but it is generally considered correct to state that the entire administrative entity is bordered on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the east by the Sea of Okhotsk, and on the south and west by the impenetrable forests of the taiga. In the early 1930's the territory consisted only of the districts of the gold fields on the upper Kolyma and the highway which was being constructed to connect the gold fields with the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk (Magadan-Srednikan-Seimchan Highway). With the passage of time other areas were added to the territory; some claim that at present the entire region encompasses not only the Kolyma area and that part bordering on the Sea of Okhotsk but also the regions along the Yana and Indigirka Rivers in addition to the whole of the Chukotsk region and Kamchatka.

Another estimate of the geographical boundaries of the territory claims that the entire Soviet Far East is under the jurisdiction of Khabarovsk Krai (a "krai" is a political subdivision), which in turn contains the following component parts: The Jewish Autonomous Oblast, Lower Amur Oblast, and Kamchatka Oblast (This last Oblast is claimed to comprise Chukchi and Koryak national okrugs; in addition, there are supposedly two distinct areas of oblast size within the Krai: One centered at Khabarovsk and the other at Magadan in the Kolyma territory, in which the constituent rayons come under the direct jurisdiction of the Khabarovsk Krai administration.

625 631 471 Be that as it may, there is ample evidence to support the contention that neither of the two above cited political divisions are technically correct; due to the establishment of Dalstroy (Far Eastern Construction Administration) in 1931-1932, it may be stated with considerable justification that the jurisdiction of Dalstroy extends over all northeast Siberia at the present time, taking in all the land east of the Lena River and north of the River Aldan. If this is the case, the total area is approximately six times that of metropolitan France or some 1,400,000 square miles.

In other words, it is quite clear that the exact geographical boundaries of the region are not known, but it may be at least assumed that Dalstroy, which is an organ of the MVD, has complete control of at least the Kolyma region and most likely the northern areas of Chukchi and Koryak. That the MVD under the name of Dalstroy is in control of large tracts of territory is a proven fact, but the territorial limitations of this organization are not clear.

642 625 3) Administration: The Constitution of the USSR is not formally operative throughout this vast area (equal to approximately 40% of the United States proper), and the usual authority of regional Soviet agencies does not apply. There are no local Soviets in the territory, nor do elections occur with the exception of those for the Supreme Soviet. However, even in this instance, it is worthy of note that the Kolyma representative in the Soviet of Nationalities is Lieutenant General Nishikov of the MVD, chief of Dalstroy. The widespread area and activities under the Dalstroy administration have resulted in an organization where the economic life of the region is combined with legislative, judicial, administrative, and police functions. In the general structure of governmental authority in the USSR, Dalstroy occupies a unique position; it is beyond all doubt an organ of the MVD, and its official name is "Dalstroy MVD." In the organization of the MVD, Dalstroy comes under the authority of one of the Deputy Ministers.

1/ [i.e., the Kolyma region of Siberia — Analyst]

however, the NVD appoints the head of Dalstroy, leaving to him the selection of his assistants. Authority is held and exercised solely by Dalstroy, and everybody who represents this authority is appointed by the head of the organization or his assistants acting as his agents. Every inhabited place has a "commandant" who has authority over the territory under his control. Under Dalstroy rules this commandant has the right to inflict the death penalty on all prisoners.

A somewhat different status is accorded to the remnants of the native tribes which form so-called "national districts." They enjoy various privileges and are given assistance by the Soviet Government; however, it should be noted that these privileges and assistance can be considered as such only in comparison with the position of the prisoners. These local tribes number only a few thousand, and even in their national districts they have no real authority to govern themselves.

4) Population: The population of the region[1] is not accurately known, primarily due to the continual turnover of prisoners who are imported by the hundreds of thousands yearly and who die at almost the same rate. Before the discovery of gold and the creation of Dalstroy, the local population could hardly have exceeded 25,000 to 30,000; according to the census of 1926-1927 the population of the Kolyma region was 7,580. It is very unlikely that the number of aborigines has materially increased under the rule of Dalstroy; in fact, during the first period of the Revolution the native population showed a marked tendency to decrease.

However, the total population of the Kolyma region during the Dalstroy administration has grown fantastically, and the only explanation is the importation of prisoner labor. The exact number of prisoners cannot be determined for obvious reasons; however, according to a report by a Soviet seaman who formerly served on ships running between Vladivostok and Magadan the entire Kolyma region is

> "a single concentration camp. Into it have been thrown huge masses of the repressed. How many of them he cannot say exactly.... In his opinion it may be calculated with considerable accuracy that during the years 1937 to 1940 not less than a million and a half persons were brought on steamers from Vladivostok to Magadan; during each navigation season from April to November four Dalstroy steamers (Felix Dzherzhinskiy, Dalstroy, Soviatsia, and Dzhurma) were in operation, each making from 12 to 15 voyages in the course of the summer and bringing from 6,000 to 9,000 persons on each voyage."[1]

(Note: Radio Magadan in a report on 24 October 1955 stated that "Nagayevo port vessels -[Nagayevo is the port servicing Magadan]- have fulfilled their annual cargo delivery plan 105.8%...the seagoing vessels of the Nagayevo maritime port overfulfilled their 8 month cargo delivery plan but failed to fulfill their 9 month plan. The leading place among seagoing vessels is being held by the steamship 'Felix Dzherzhinskiy.' Good results were also achieved by the steamship 'Dzhurma' which is on its way from Nakhodka to the Kresta Bay carrying vegetables, foodstuffs, manufactured goods, fruits, construction and technical materials, and equipment." The interesting feature of this report is the fact that the steamships "Felix Dzherzhinskiy" and "Dzhurma" which were definitely known to be transporting laborers in 1940 are still plying the same route and very likely are carrying the same "freight" because the hulls of these two ships are known to be constructed to carry prisoners, not freight as stated.)

---

1 Dallin, David J., Forced Labor in Soviet Russia (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 136-137 [i.e., Kolyma - ANALYST]